

Annual Report

The WIZ Spectacular

Secondary Musical Caps Off a Wonderful Year at SOTE



The WIZ Principals: Ben Spinetti, Tom Simpson, Alex Darton, Marian Faa and Joel Briggs

This year saw the Official Opening of Building 7, the completion of Stage 2 of the Playground Project and the finalisation of a major water harvesting project. After all the building and associated disruption to the playground of these projects it was wonderful to see it all come together.

There were many highlights to the year not least the School's

participation in the biennial *Peace Festival* to which the School made many contributions. One of these was *Pinter Plus* (see over) the last major senior production directed by SOTE veteran, Neil Rasmussen. There was also the *Science Expo*, the Year 12 Presentation to parents on *Are We Growing Up Too Fast?* and of course the secondary musical *The WIZ*, directed by Colin Alley.

Character First

With all the focus on academic achievement over the past few years in education with the publication of Year 12 Results, OP Tables and the NAPLAN Test Results, it is perhaps easy to overlook the importance of a balanced approach to education.

At The School of Total Education we are of course pleased when the students do well in their academic achievement but our focus is also on the importance of producing good citizens or, in other words, on the character development of students.

There is plenty of evidence of this in situations such as the Graduation, Work Experience, Students Running the School Day and the general level of behaviour of students.

Richard Waters, Principal

GRADUATION SPEAKER ON THE VOICE OF THE HEART.

Psychologist and counsellor, Robin Grille, was the keynote speaker at the 2009 Graduation. It was salutary to hear him talk of the importance to the individual and to society, of the students following their hearts in their learning and in life after school. This idea of course speaks to the concept of 'innateness' in Total Education — the idea that everyone has a gift and that it is up to the teachers and the parents to work together to facilitate this to be expressed for the release of the individual student's potential. Robin added the further point that if the child was enabled to do what they loved not only would they be fulfilled but the world would be more peaceful and the richer for it as well.



Distinctive Curriculum

Total Education

The School's curriculum is based on the program of *Total Education*, devised and implemented by School Founder Vijayadev Yogendra. This provides for a balance between Academic, Health & Physical and Character Development as well as a focus on the key relationships in the School between students, parents and teachers.

Yoga Classes

Yoga Classes are taken on a voluntary basis for secondary students. There was a high level of participation in these classes by students in Years 11 and 12. Classes are taken by Debbie Lane at the Centre For Healthy Living which is adjacent to the School.



School Meals

The School provides a hot lunch twice a week. The teachers and students sit together and share a meal and this creates a positive family atmosphere in the School. This year the menu has been reviewed in relation to current nutritional standards. Parents assist with the running of the kitchen and the preparation of hot meals. Children help by laying the tables.

Film, Television and New Media

Film and Television is offered at Years 10-12. InHee Jeong, who has had an extensive career in the industry, leads the teaching in this area with Michael Funder assisting to ensure senior academic requirements are covered.

This year students participated in a number of Outside Broadcasting opportunities. These included the *Peace in the Park* event and a number of other activities that were part of the *Peace Festival Warwick*. The students did a very professional job.

Quiet Time

Quiet Time is for primary children and emphasises the value of finding a sense of quietude. Storytelling with a focus on positive values is used to settle the children. They spend a few minutes with their eyes closed listening to music or ambient sounds.

Two Hours of Physical Education

Students in Grades 1 to 3 take part in the *Movement for Learning Program*, which includes cross-patterning exercises and co-ordination activities which stimulate brain development. All students take part in 15 minutes of physical education on four days a week as well as a weekly sport class with a duration varying from 45 minutes at junior primary to 90 minutes at secondary level.

Interest Groups

Twice each term, primary students have the choice of a number of activities offered by teachers through the Interest Groups Program. It is a chance for students to follow a passion, to mix with students from other classes and to connect up with a teacher who shares their interests.

Vegetable Garden and Chicken Run

Year 9 students looked after the vegetable garden this year which produced fresh vegetables for the school kitchen. Year 10 students took responsibility for the care of the chickens whose eggs are collected for use in the school meals.



Time Out Program

The Time Out Program is conducted in the second semester of Year 7 and the first semester of Year 8. Students cover their core academic program on four mornings a week. The afternoons are spent on student-directed activities. A weekly excursion gives students a broad-based outdoor experience

Extra-Curricular Activities

Science Expo

The Science Expo on March 6th was a full day of entertaining and educative activities highlighting the School's Science Program. Senior students took the lead in helping groups consisting of Years 1-10 make the most of the day's activities. An evening program including displays from senior students.

Anzac Day

A number of senior students expressed an interest in marching in the annual Anzac Day event. They acquitted themselves in a respectful and sincere way.



Senior Drama Production

This year's Senior production was *Pinter Plus*, a collection of revue sketches from British playwright Harold Pinter who won the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize for Literature. The production was staged at the Warwick Town Hall in May.



A scene from Pinter Plus

Students Running the School Day

On Thursday 4th June, the Year 9 students took over the running of the school for the day. The students tasks ranged

from Principal and Secretary to Primary, Physical Education and Music Teachers. The students were very responsible in their roles as well as enjoying the day.

Work Experience

The Year 10's undertook work experience at a very wide variety of work places from Monday 1st to Friday 5th June. Some of these included: Warwick Daily News, music stores, the University of Queensland Antiquities Museum, computer stores and Warwick East Special Education Unit.

Peace Festival

Students, parents and teachers took part in many activities associated with the Warwick *Peace Festival*. School personnel played a leading role in a number of these.



Japanese Tea Ceremony

Art Exhibitions

Both primary and secondary students were represented at the Warwick Regional Art Gallery's School Exhibitions.

Are We Growing Up Too Fast?

At the Combined Parents Meeting on the 31st July, Year 12 students gave an excellent presentation on the topic of "Are We Growing Up Too Fast?"

Book Week

Primary students had a special day on 27th August to

mark the culmination of their Book Week activities under the theme of *Book Safari*. Teachers and students dressed up as literary characters.

Outdoor Education Centre

The School continued its Outdoor Education Centre (OEC) on the bush property at Upper Freestone. Each class spent a half day over four weeks at the Centre. Colin Alley, who has many years of experience with the scouts, conducts the program.



The Prep class at The Cascades

Secondary Musical

This year the secondary musical was *The WIZ* directed by Colin Alley and Neil Rasmussen and choreographed by Lisa Notley. Performances were held in the Warwick Town Hall on 16th, 17th and 18th October. It was a joyful, colorful and well produced piece of theatre.

Safe Driving Training

Year 11 students had a full day at Willowbank Racetrack on 27th October on how to avoid accidents and handle dangerous driving situations. This program is a very effective education program for young drivers.

Extra-curricular activities depend on the support of teaching staff who are willing to put in many extra hours to make these events a success.

Use of Computers to Enhance Learning

Computer Access

The aim is to provide 1:1 access for secondary students to computers by the end of 2011. The School successfully applied for a grant under the Digital Education Revolution (DER) program. Part of this grant required the development of a strategic plan for the use of computers in the school. This was a very useful exercise.

Currently, there are primary and secondary computer labs for general use and specialist labs for Film and Television and New Media. The latter was upgraded this year as part of the DER program. The New Media Lab now has software for technical graphics (CAD), creative graphics and graphic design (Illustrator, Photoshop), video editing (iMovie) stop animation and creation of simple games.

Computers are also available for specialist areas such as science, music and art. There is a small lab for Time Out use.

Student Laptop Program

Students in Years 10, 11 and 12 who have their own laptop found this a very helpful aid to learning in the senior years. However, it has also brought up various issues to do with security of the network and the need for a content filtering program. These are being addressed.

Teacher Laptop Program

Every teacher has a MacBook laptop. These are used for class preparation, research on the internet and reporting to parents. Teachers have access to data projectors and are also able to use digital video cameras to record oral presentations and edit these on their computer.

Students are quick to adopt new technologies and often it seems they are more comfortable with it than their teachers. However, the teachers provide the important aspect of the discerning use of technology.

School Network

Teachers and students can now access the school network from anywhere in the school by means of wireless or ethernet. This means, for example, teachers can use a data projector to display an internet site live and students can obtain task sheets and hand in work through a 'drop box' system.

The purpose is to train students so that they are not dependent on computers but are able to make use of information technology to assist and enhance their learning.

New Media students in Year 8 and 9 learn word processing, spreadsheet, presentation skills and web page design as well as to use vector based graphic design programs.

Students of **Humanities** subjects such as English, History and Study of Society use computers for word processing, internet research and oral presentations.

Art students access artwork and research artists on the internet. They use computers to write essays and visual diaries. Photoshop is used to manipulate pictures to create artwork.

Film & TV students create short films and documentaries using digital video equipment and video editing software with the final products being burnt to DVD.

Drama students use the internet to access information about playwrights and texts in their assignments as well as for poster design.

Mathematics: Spreadsheets are used extensively for statistical and financial analysis including graphical representation of the results.

Primary students work on projects with their teachers through supervised internet access on their classroom computers and the primary lab.

Science: Internet research is conducted on projects and Word or Power Point are used to present the results. Virtual dissections are conducted on-line for Biology.



Social Climate

Student Well-Being

The Home Group system at secondary level ensures one teacher maintains an overview of each student's progress and well-being. The Home Group program looks after study skills, sex education, values education and welfare issues.

Primary and Secondary teachers assist each other with student welfare with support from the Deputy Principal and Principal.

Teachers Well Being

Measures taken to support teachers to follow up the Well -Being Seminar held 2008:

- * A \$50,000 resources top-up was provided for much needed equipment and learning materials nominated by teachers.
- * Intensity of teacher workloads were addressed by the appointment of teacher aides for Prep and Primary and the employment of an additional secondary teacher.
- * Support with stress was provided by an offer of free counselling through the Centre for

Healthy Living and also a Quiet Space for reflection and relaxation for teachers.

Counselling

Confidential counselling is available to students, parents and teachers by psychologists at *The Centre For Healthy Living* adjacent to the School.

Student Attendance

Student attendance is monitoring by roll marking twice each day and extended absences are followed up by teachers and then if necessary by the Deputy Principal. The close relationship between parents and the School ensures that extended non-attendance is very rare.

Average Student Attendance by Year Level

Prep Year	91%	Year 8	93%
Grade 1	92%	Year 9	89%
Grade 2	98%	Year 10	98%
Grade 3	89%	Year 11	81%
Grade 4	90%	Year 12	90%
Grade 5	88%		
Grade 6	90%		
Grade 7	89%		



Teachers and Students 2009

Parent Communication & Involvement

Parents' Program

Parents at SOTE attend a weekly discussion group on parenting issues. Groups are facilitated by parents with more experience at the School. Training and support for facilitators is provided through *Group Leaders' Meetings*.

Combined Parent Meetings involving all the parents are held twice each term. The most highly rated presentation this year was the Year 12 students' talk on *Are We Growing Up Too Fast?* Other highly rated presentations included *Building Our Capacity for Love* by Principal, Richard Waters and Robin Grille's *Parenting Seminars* as part of the Peace Festival. A talk on *Sex-ting* by a police spokesperson to secondary parents was also well received.

Grade Meetings

Grade Meetings were held at the start of Term 3 for all levels. Parents met with the Class or Home Teacher to discuss the group's progress and exchange views on how issues might be tackled jointly between home and school.

Reporting to Parents

At the end of Term 2 and Term 4 parents receive a *Report of Student Progress* which covers

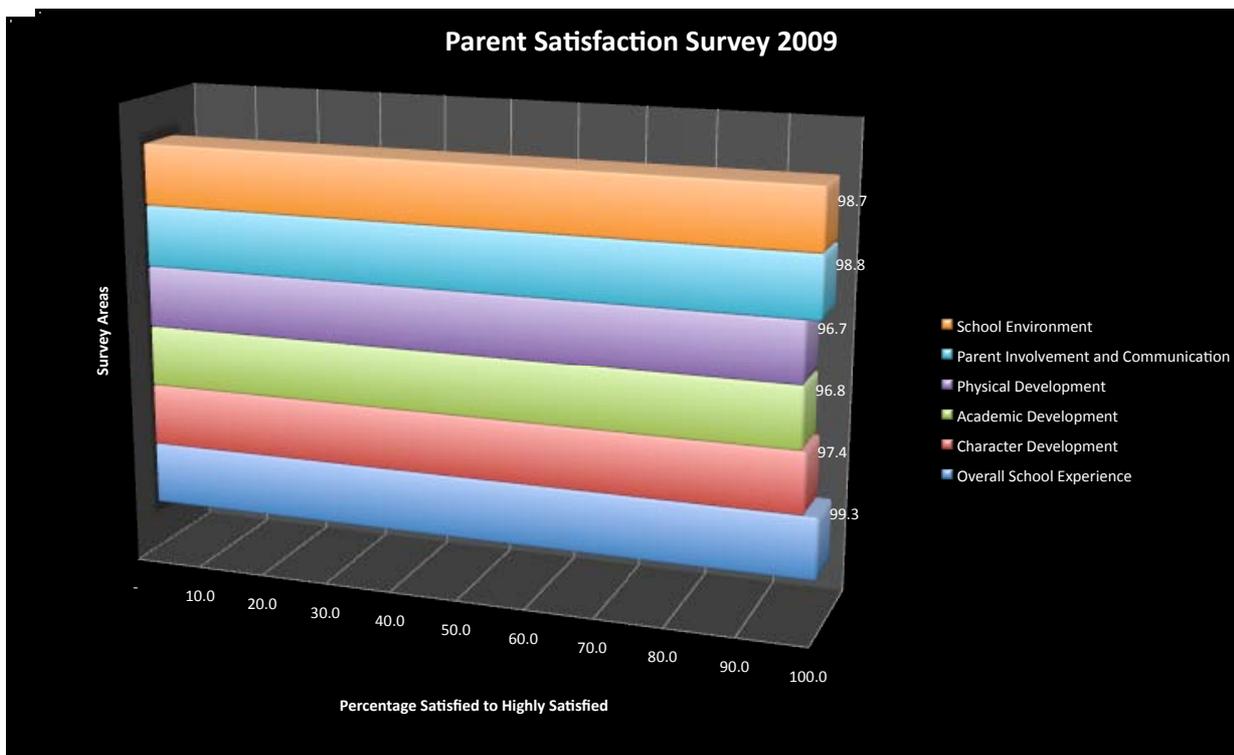
academic, character and physical development as well as subject reports with an A to E grading at secondary level. All primary parents have agreed not to be included in A to E reporting. Primary reports include comments on each child's achievement in each Key Learning Area. Prep Reports are issued based on a combination of the Education Queensland template the SOTE Reports framework.

Parent Satisfaction Survey

Parents were surveyed on their satisfaction with various aspects of the School's functioning. 75% of parents responded to the survey. Parents indicated they were satisfied to highly satisfied in relation to the following key areas areas of school activity (see chart below).

Feedback from Parents

Parents rated the Secondary Musical, *The WIZ* (92%) the Senior Play, *Pinter Plus* and the *Primary Music Concert*. (both 90%) as the School Activities they most enjoyed in 2009. These were closely followed by *Peace Festival Activities* (88%) and the *Science Expo* (86%). Feedback was also sought from parents on the topics they would like to see covered in the next year's program.



Progress on the School's Strategic Goals

THE SUSTAINING OF THE SCHOOL INTO THE FUTURE IS AN IMPORTANT FOCUS

School Governing Council

The School Governing Council meets bi-monthly and considers issues of policy and strategy, especially the continuation of the School's core principles and values.

Planning Discussions

At the conclusion of the year, the progress towards the goals set for the 2008-2011 Planning Cycle were reviewed and it was encouraging to see the progress being made.

Development of Teachers

Provision for one teacher each year to have Long Service Leave was built into the budget. There has been focus on the core principles of the School in Teacher Development discussions.

Development of Parents

Support for Group Leaders was given priority this year with input on *Group Dynamics* and *Involving Men in Discussion*, provided in the bi-monthly meetings. New Group Leaders were inducted and mentored.

Review of Menus

Debbie Lane initiated a review of the School Menus by nutritionist Elia Faa and Ayurveda student, Leslie O'Brien with a view to continuous improvement of the School Menu.

Succession Planning

Grooming new leadership so that the School is sustainable into the future was given more focus. Teachers appointed this year included: Alison Rowling in Prep, Gavin Leslie in Grade 7, Ian Rowling for Phys. Ed. and Wanda Brett in Grade 6.

Building

The Building 7 Project including three new classrooms and a library was completed and opened in March this year. This has allowed significant progress towards the School's Master Plan.

The Playground has also seen the completion of Stages One and Two adding greatly to the amenity of the School.

An audit of the School's Maintenance and Cleaning processes was undertaken.

The Institute of Total Education

Richard Waters continued working one day each week on the development of the Institute this year.

Queensland University of Technology (QUT) sent a team to the School led by Prof. Jo Brownlee early in the year to undertake a research project on the issue of Values at early Childhood Level

Richard renewed contact with the main teacher training universities with a view to letting their students know about the School and to encourage trainees to do field service at SOTE.

Richard presented two workshops on the topic of *Consider the Alternatives* at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) *Stepping Out Conference* for final year education students. He also joined a forum discussion with Principals from Education Queensland. A student visited the School as a follow up and one student who was in the audience is now employed at the School.



Programs for SOTE teachers included: quarterly seminars on principles of Total Education, the Teacher Development Program and Mentoring on Total Education for new teachers.

Richard attended a ISQ hosted meeting of small alternative schools to discuss what common ground there might be between them. This has led to the creation of an Alternative Schools Network.

Teacher Development

Staff Stability

The School has a high level of staff stability with 91% of the teaching staff being retained from the previous year.

Staff Composition

- Full-time Teachers: 68%
- Part-time Teachers: 18%
- Full-time Non-Teaching: 3.8%
- Part-time Non-Teaching: 8.6%
- Indigenous Staff: 1.5%

Teacher's Seminars

Teachers started the year with a seminar on *Teaching Philosophy at SOTE*. There was a mixture of large and small group discussion.

The focus at the Easter seminar was on *Building Student's Self-Esteem*, and speakers included Ian Rowling, Claire Waters and Judy Currie.

In July the topic was *Remembering Beauty* with Colin Alley, Neil Rasmussen and Lua Johnson-Tilbrook.

Curriculum Afternoons

Teachers spend two afternoons each term on curriculum issues. This year the focus was on writing up SOTE existing curriculum, the *First Steps Approach to Teaching Spelling, Towards a National Curriculum, IT Support for Video Download* and the new *Continuing Professional Development Framework* which comes into effect in 2010.

Other curriculum afternoons were held on *Science Expo Day* planning and a review of SOTE students' performances on the *NAPLAN Tests*.

Professional Development

SOTE Teachers (24) attended a variety of Professional Development Programs both internal and external. These programs are often subsidised by either Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) or the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA). The amount expended per teacher on professional development was \$194 p.a. This excludes cost of teacher replacement which is necessary when a teacher is at professional development activities.

Activities attended by SOTE teachers this year included Syllabus workshops in Senior English, German, Chemistry, Physics, Visual Art and Biology. Other workshops attended included: QCATs, QCAR, Music Technology, Media, Health and Physical Education, Science, Fire Safety, First Aid, Autism Spectrum Disorder, First Steps in Spelling and National Curriculum.

SOTE teachers mentored several pre-service teachers from USQ and QUT.

Teacher Development

A Teacher Development Program on the principles of Total Education are held fortnightly. This ensures there is a regular forum for teachers to reflect on their teaching in relation to personal and school goals. These programs are conducted by SOTE personnel and in 2009 included: *Creativity in Education, Focus on Individual Children, Well-Being Check-In, and Planning for 2010*.

Teachers' Qualifications

Leadership

Richard Waters
BA, Dip. Ed, M.Ed (Leadership)

Judy Currie
BSc, Dip. Ed.

Full-Time Secondary Teachers

Colin Alley
Dip Teach, M.Ed Admin

Matthew Bradshaw
BA, B Ed.

Roy Fox
BSc, Dip Ed

Judy Funder
MA, Dip Ed

Michael Funder
B Mus Ed

Ronda Mattarollo
BA, BEd (Secondary)

Nigel Sullivan
BEng, (Hons), Dip Ed

Full-Time Primary Teachers

Wanda Brett
BMus, BEd

Stephen Clark
Grad Dip Ed (Early Childhood)

Jane House
BEd (Primary)

Lua Johnson
BA Drama (Secondary), Dip Ed

Patrice Jubb
Dip Teaching (Early Childhood)

Karen Leech
Dip Teaching

Alison Rowling
BEd (Primary)

Ian Rowling
BEd (Health & Phys Ed)

Part-Time Teachers

Bernadine Bradshaw
BA (Hons), Dip Ed

Alan Isaacs
BSc (Hons), Dip Ed, Dip Lib

Pam Isaacs
BA (Hons), MA, Dip Ed

Cathy Petrasinas
BA, Dip Ed
Grad Dip Hum (French)

Neil Rasmussen
Dip Fine Arts, TSTC.

Claire Waters
BA, T.S.T.C.

Required Statistics

System Affiliation

Independent, non-systemic, non-denominational.

Member, Independent Schools of Queensland.

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2 Freestone Road,
Warwick, Queensland 4370

Telephone: 61 7 4661 2666

Facsimile: 61 7 4661 4894

Email: admin@sote.qld.edu.au

Website: www.sote.qld.edu.au

Enrollments

147 students

85 primary and

62 secondary students

2 indigenous students (1.4%)

91% Average attendance Yrs 1-10

Year Levels Offered

Prep to Year 12.

Single stream at each level except Year 9 (2 streams).

Gender

Co-Educational at all levels.

58 girls and 89 boys.

Retention Rates

82 % Apparent Retention Rate

91% Actual Retention Rate

Staff Statistics

91% Staff Retention from 2006.

97% Staff Attendance Rate.

\$194 Staff Development costs (per teacher per annum)

\$4656 Total funds expended on Teacher Prof. Dev.

100% Teachers attending staff development activities in 2009.

Teachers and Students

Ratio of 1 teacher to 13 students

School Comment

These statistics and the adjacent tables are part of Government requirements and need to be read with some caution given the small student numbers at SOTE.

Grade 3 NAPLAN Test 2008 (9 students)

Test	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar Punctuation	Numeracy
Average Score (School)	382	368	353	341	392
Average Score (National)	400	414	399	403	397
% above National Minimum	100%	89%	67%	78%	100%

Grade 3 NAPLAN Test 2009 (10 students)

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar Punctuation	Numeracy
Average Score (School)	341	312	298	318	323
Average Score (National)	411	414	405	420	394
% above National Minimum	60%	44%	40%	50%	60%

Grade 5 NAPLAN Test 2008 (13 students)

Test	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar Punctuation	Numeracy
Average Score (School)	481	419	418	472	460
Average Score (National)	484	486	484	496	476
% above National Minimum	69%	69%	39%	77%	77%

Grade 5 NAPLAN Test 2009 (14 students)

Test	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar Punctuation	Numeracy
Average Score (School)	504	454	478	519	485
Average Score (National)	494	485	487	500	487
% above National Minimum	85%	69%	85%	85%	77%

Grade 7 NAPLAN Test 2008 (11 students)

Test	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar Punctuation	Numeracy
Average Score (School)	548	496	496	534	561
Average Score (National)	537	534	537	529	545
% above National Minimum	82%	73%	55%	64%	82%

Grade 7 NAPLAN Test 2009 (12 students)

Test	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar Punctuation	Numeracy
Average Score (School)	534	486	500	507	508
Average Score (National)	541	533	540	540	544
% above National Minimum	67%	83%	67%	67%	75%

Year 9 NAPLAN Test 2008 (12 students)

Test	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar Punctuation	Numeracy
Average Score (School)	628	604	611	612	628
Average Score (National)	578	569	577	569	582
% above National Minimum	100%	83%	100%	92%	100%

Year 9 Test NAPLAN 2009 (21 students)

Test	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar Punctuation	Numeracy
Average Score (School)	585	555	564	595	614
Average Score (National)	570	569	576	574	589
% above National Minimum	81%	57%	76%	81%	100%

Year 12 Outcomes 2009

Students awarded a Senior Statement	9
Students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement	0
Students who received an Overall Position (OP)	9
Students completed/completing School-based Apprenticeship/Traineeship	0
Students awarded one or more Voc Ed and Training (VET) qualifications	0
Students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) at end of Year 12	8
Students awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD)	0
% of Y12 students who received an OP1-15 or IBD	89%
% of Y12 students completed/completing SAT or were awarded QCE, IBD, VET	89%
% of QTAC applicants receiving an offer	100%